

Shrewsbury High School
English Department and Library Media Center
Revised 1/04

MLA Rules for Documentation

Adapted from:

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2003.

What is MLA Style?

This is the style recommended by the Modern Language Association for preparing scholarly manuscripts and student research papers.

Works Cited / Works Consulted General Rules

When doing research, you must use a standard citation format to identify the information you have used and give credit to its creator. Consistency is crucial.

Each work is usually identified by three key elements: author's name - title of source - publication information. The title should be either underlined or in quotation marks, depending on the type of source. A period and a space follow each element. Do not add the period when the element ends with another punctuation mark such as a question or a quotation mark. Additional elements such as number of volumes or edition numbers might be required.

The first line of each citation starts at the left margin; the second and any succeeding lines are double spaced and indented one half inch. Use the TAB key to indent a half-inch. You may also use the Hanging Indent Format in Microsoft Word.

Each source is listed separately and arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. (Start with the title when there is no author.) Whenever a title starts with an article ("a", "an" or "the"), alphabetize by the next word.

When citing two or more books by the same author, give the name in the first entry only and type three hyphens in place of the name in the second entry and any subsequent ones.

If you can not find some information, skip it and cite what is available.

Abbreviate in these instances: all names of states and months except May, June and July. Use *UP* for University Press and omit *Inc.* and *Co.*

NOTE: Refer to the latest edition of the MLA Handbook in the library or the MLA Web Page for additional information and examples. A link to MLA is provided on the SHS Media Center homepage at www.shrewsburyma.gov/schools/SHS/MediaCenter/shsmain.html.

SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR PRINT SOURCES

A Book by a Single Author/Editor (see 5.6.1.)

Bloom, Harold, ed. Gabriel Garcia Marquez. New York: Chelsea, 1989.

Silver, Lee M. Remaking Eden: Cloning and Beyond in a Brave New World. New York: Avon, 1997.

A Book by Two or More Authors/Editors (see 5.6.4.)

Eggins, Suzanne, and Diana Slade. Analyzing Casual Conversation. London: Casell, 1997.

Rabkin, Eric S., Martin H. Greenberg, and Joseph D. Olander, eds. No Place Else: Explorations in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983.

“If there are more than three authors, you may name only the first and add *et al.* (‘and others’)...” (Gibaldi 154).

For example:

Note: This is our 11 Honors U.S. History textbook.

Roark, James L., et al. The American Promise: A History of the United States. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford Books, 2002.

A Work in an Anthology (see 5.6.7.)

Note: This is our Grade 11 Literature textbook.

Poe, Edgar Allan. “The Fall of the House of Usher.” Prentice Hall Literature: The American Experience. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989. 208-220.

An Article in a Reference Book (see 5.6.8.)

“Treat an encyclopedia article or a dictionary entry as you would a piece in a collection [anthology]....If the article is signed, give the author first....if it is unsigned, give the title first. If the encyclopedia or dictionary arranges articles alphabetically, you may omit volume and page numbers” (Gibaldi 160).

For example:

"Ginsburg, Ruth Bader." Who's Who in America. 56th ed. 2002.

"Mandarin." The Encyclopedia Americana. 1994 ed.

Mohanty, Jitendra M. "Indian Philosophy." The New Encyclopedia Britannica: Macropaedia. 15th ed. 1987.

"Noon." The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989.

"If you are using only one volume of a multivolume work, state the number of the volume in the bibliographic entry ('Vol. 2.') and give publication information for that volume alone" (Gibaldi 138).

Example:

"Bell, Alexander Graham." Dictionary of American Biography. Vol. 1. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964.

Lutz, Alma. "Susan Brownell Anthony." Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary. Vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1971.

A Translation (5.6.13.)

Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Viking, 1996.

A Pamphlet (see 5.6.20.)

Washington, DC. New York: Trip Builder, 2000.

A Government Publication (see 5.6.21.)

United Nations. Consequences of Rapid Population Growth in Developing Countries. New York: Taylor, 1991.

An Article in a Newspaper (see 5.7.5.)

Note 1: "Abbreviate the names of all months except May, June, and July (see 6.2)" (Gibaldi 185).

Note 2: "Newspaper articles are often not printed on consecutive pages--for example, an article might begin on page 1, then skip to page 16. For such articles, write only the first page number and a plus sign...: 6+, C3+. (Gibaldi 186).

Harris, Nicole. "Airports in the Throes of Change." Wall Street Journal 27 Mar. 2002: B1+.

An Article in a Magazine or Journal (see 5.7.6.)

Note: "Abbreviate the names of all months except May, June, and July (see 6.2)" (Gibaldi 185).

(a magazine published every week or every two weeks)

Adler, Jerry. "Mad Cow: What's Safe Now?" Newsweek 12 Jan. 2004: 43-48.

"If no author's name is given for the article you are citing, begin the entry with the title" (Gibaldi 190):

"Dubious Adventure." Time 3 Jan. 1994: 64-65.

(a magazine published every month or every two months)

Fallows, James. "The Early-Decision Racket." Educational Leadership. Sept. 2001: 37-52.

An Article in a Microform Collection of Articles (see 5.7.14.)

"The Dred Scott Decision." New York Times 11 Apr. 1857. UMI: Great Events I (1978): fiche 1, grid 11b.

Kelly, Michael. "A Man Who Wants to Be Liked, and Is." New York Times 4 Nov. 1992: A1+. UMI 1992 Nov. 1-14: microfilm.

NOTE: Since the MLA guide does not provide a microfilm sample, the above has been created for SHS students.

A Sound Recording (see 5.8.2)

"If you are citing a specific song, place its title in quotation marks" (Gibaldi 197).

Holiday, Billie. "God Bless the Child." Rec. 9 May 1941. The Essence of Billie Holiday. Columbia, 1991.

Simon, Paul, and Milton Nascimento. "Spirit Voices." The Rhythm of the Saints. Warner Bros., 1990.

"If you are not using a compact disc, indicate the medium...before the manufacturer's name: *Audiocassette...Audiotape* (reel-to-reel tape), or *LP*" (Gibaldi 196):

Marsalis, Branford. Romances for Saxophone. English Chamber Orch. Cond. Andrew Litton. Audiocassette. CBS, 1986.

A Film, Video or DVD (see 5.8.3.)

“Cite a videocassette, DVD, laser disc, slide program, or filmstrip...includ[ing] the original release date (if relevant, and the medium...before the name of the distributor” (Gibaldi 198-199).

It's a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. Perf. James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, and Thomas Mitchell. 1946. DVD. Republic, 1998.

NOTE: The above sample shows an “entertainment” film. Below is a sample documentary film (without actors/actresses):

Days of Judgment: The Salem Witch Trials of 1692. Prod. Robert J. Taritis. Videocassette. Osram Sylvania, 1993.

Summer of Judgment: The Impeachment Hearings. PBS Videodatabase of America's History and Culture. Vol. 220. Videocassette. PBS.

A Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph (see 5.8.6.)

El Greco. Burial of Count Orgaz. San Tome, Toledo. Renaissance Perspectives in Literature and the Visual Arts. By Murray Roston. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987. 274.

Rembrandt van Rijn. Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

An Interview (see 5.8.7.)

(interviews conducted by the researcher)

Pei, I. M. Personal interview. 22 July 1993.

Poussaint, Alvin F. Telephone interview. 10 Dec. 1998.

Rowling, J. K. E-mail interview. 8-12 May 2002.

A Class Handout (No MLA model available. So we invent...)

“The Witch Test.” Class handout. English 11. Mr. Secino. Shrewsbury High School. Mar. 2000.

SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR INTERNET SOURCES

NOTES: The date before the URL is the date you visited the website.

"Enclose URLs [network addresses] in angle brackets [<>]. If a URL must be divided between two lines, break it only after a slash; do not introduce a hyphen at the break or allow your word processing program to do so. Give the complete address, including the access-mode identifier (*http, ftp, gopher, telnet, news*)" (Gibaldi 211).

If you can not find some information, skip it and cite what is available.

A Homepage for an Academic Department, etc. (see 5.9.2)

University of Newcastle Drama Department. Michael R. Booth Theatre Collection.

22 Dec. 2003 <<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/departments/dm/booth/booth.htm>>.

An Article in an Online Periodical (Newspaper or Magazine Website) (see 5.9.4.)

Harmon, Amy. "Have Laptop, Will Track Each Blip in the Market." New York Times on the Web 6 Sept. 1998. 22 Dec. 2003 <<http://www.nytimes.com>>.

A Work from a Library or Personal Subscription Service (see 5.9.7.)

(an Article in a periodical database like ProQuest at SHS)

Keegan, John, and Tom Wolfe. "Who Should be Person of the Century?" Time 30 August 1999: 15+. Platinum Periodical. ProQuest. Shrewsbury High School Lib. MA. 12 Nov. 2003 <<http://proquest.umi.com/pdqweb>>.

(an article in a reference database at SHS)

"George Washington." Dictionary of American Biography. Biography Resource Center. InfoTrac. Shrewsbury Public Lib. MA. 20 Dec. 2003 <<http://galenet.galegroup.com>>.

Suinsheimer, Robert L. "DNA." Encyclopedia Americana. Grolier Online. Shrewsbury High School Lib. MA. 20 Dec. 2003 <<http://go.grolier.com>>.

(an article from a personal online service)

"Table Tennis." Compton's Encyclopedia Online. Vers. 2.0. 1997. America Online. 4 July 1998. Keyword: Compton's.